

REVIEW EXERCISES
IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

BY REV. C. H. CLAY TRUMBULL

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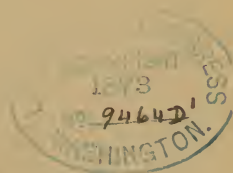
REVIEW EXERCISES IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

THEIR VALUE AND METHODS.

BY

REV. H. CLAY TRUMBULL,

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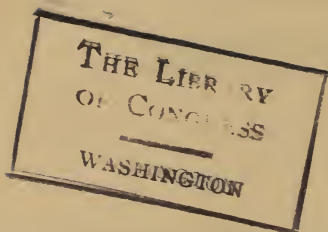
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SUNDAY-SCHOOL REVIEWS.

HARDLY any department of the teacher's work is of greater importance than that of reviews; yet hardly any has received less attention in treatises on Sunday-school teaching, or in actual Sunday-school practice. While an admitted fundamental law of teaching is, "Review, review, review; carefully, thoroughly, repeatedly," volume after volume and essay upon essay, on the work of the Sunday-school teacher, have been completed without so much as a passing mention of the necessity or methods of reviewing; and it is doubtless true to-day that in a large majority of Sunday-schools nothing like a review is ever attempted, either in the class or from the desk, and little is known of how best to conduct one.

The theme has of course not been left unnoticed by every well-known Sunday-school writer. Under the heads of "repetition," "revision," and "recapitulation," as well as of "review," its importance has been recognized and its principles enforced by those whose words have weight in the Sunday-school world. James Inglis has said, "One of the most essential,

though least interesting parts of the work of Sunday-school instruction, is the revision of what has been previously taught. Every teacher must lay his account with a large measure of this kind of work." Says W. H. Groser, "Teachers must be content, even though they sometimes find it wearisome, to present the same old truths again and again, until they are securely lodged in the understanding and the heart of the pupil." Dr. Gregory declares, "No time is spent more profitably in school than the time spent in reviews; and he is the best teacher, other things being equal, who secures from his class the most frequent and thorough reviews." "For many years," says Ralph Wells, "I have been deeply impressed with the importance of reviews, and fear the subject has not been duly pondered in many of our Sunday-schools." Yet notwithstanding all these warm words of good workers, so little prominence has, on the whole, been given to the department of reviews in comparison with other phases of the teacher's work, in the range of Sunday-school literature, that now when Sunday-schools generally are invited, in the plan of the International Lessons, to give to reviews at least one Sunday in a quarter, there seems a call for the suggestions herewith presented as to the value and methods of review exercises in the Sunday-school.

WHY TO REVIEW.

1. *Truth is fastened in the mind only through its frequent repetition.*

A child does not know its own name merely from hearing it once called. Each letter of the alphabet must be many times repeated to fix it in the young learner's mind. The multiplication table is memorized by the brightest scholar only through saying it over and over again. The simplest truths of religion require quite as many repetitions to give them a permanent place in the mind of a beginner in knowledge as do facts of a less important character. It has been truly said, "A child will not remember that God made him, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners, that Adam was the first man, or Eve the first woman, merely because he has been told all these particulars once. A hymn or a text, though committed with perfect accuracy, will soon fade from the memory, unless the impression of it is revived by

frequent repetition." The plea is well founded, in the hymn of "The Old, Old Story,"—

"Tell me the story often,
For I forget so soon:
The 'early dew' of morning
Has pass'd away at noon."

That which is fully understood one day will often be forgotten the next unless it is revived and reviewed. Scholars who recited well their lessons last week do not necessarily carry those lessons with them still, if nothing has been said of them since their first recital. Many who seemed intelligent and appreciative in their study of last quarter's lessons, cannot now tell from what book of the Bible those lessons were taken, nor name a person mentioned in them, because they were never called to a review of the truths once passed over. It is a rare thing for any person to have clearly in mind a truth he has heard but once. Not with children alone, but with all, "precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line;" to give full force to wise injunctions. When our Lord would lay a new command on the penitent Peter, he not only asked, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" but "He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Nor content with one such

repetition, "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" And three times also he enjoined upon the disciple the care of his flock. Who doubts that this re-enforcement and review of his first utterance gave manifold power to those words of our Lord to Peter?

The truth that has been once stated—the lesson that has been once taught—is not on that account to be passed without further mention. It is the very one to be repeated and reviewed, that it may be fairly and fully in the mind of the pupil. Only through often repetition does truth find a final lodgment in the memory.

2. A review gives a new and better understanding of any subject.

One sweep of the heavens with a telescope does not make an astronomer. The soldier is not a veteran when he has been through a single battle. A sailor knows the sea better after his twentieth voyage than after his first. A solitary case of scarlet fever treated successfully does not make a skilled physician. No man is familiar with the mountains or the woods when he has examined them once. He who has never seen Niagara or the Yosemite valley a second time knows

little of its grandeur and beauties. He who thinks he could find nothing new at that point on another visit has but a pitiful sense of what God has there disclosed of his power and glory.

Even a fine painting or a piece of sculpture must be often seen to be fully appreciated. Far more is it true that no important subject of study is comprehended on its first examination. "Its novelties dazzle or confuse the mind. As when we enter a strange house, we know not where to look at once for the several apartments, and the articles of interest and value; even a familiar guide can only point them out to us; we need to return again and again, and observe them with eyes grown familiar to the place and light: so one rarely returns to an old book or lesson without finding much that is new and valuable which escaped the first study. . . . At every review we approach the lesson from a new point of view. We come with a different aim and feeling, and bring with us the light of some new knowledge."*

Peculiarly is it true that in Bible lessons there is an advantage in re-examination and review. Says quaint old Thomas Fuller, "Lord, this morning I read a chapter in the Bible, and therein observed a

* Dr. J. M. Gregory, in "The Sunday-School Teacher."

memorable passage, whereof I never took notice before. Why now, and no sooner, did I see it? Formerly my eyes were as open and the letters as legible. Is there not a thin veil laid over thy word, which is more rarefied by reading, and at last wholly worn away?" So, in our own day, Dean Alford closed his twenty years work on a commentary of the New Testament with the conviction of his utter inability fully to fathom the simplest passage of God's Word, and Dr. Stowe declares, after more than a score of times passing over each verse of the Bible, in a critical search of its meaning in the original text, that he finds truth which seems utterly new and fresh in every review of what he has been over so many times before. Hence few exercises of the Sunday-school are more directly profitable than reviews of Bible lessons already considered; and it seems a wrong towards a scholar to deny him the advantages of a later examination of the lesson once studied, with its resulting benefits in new disclosures of truth and beauty.

3. Reviews are necessary to show the unity and harmony of a series of lessons.

He who could only see one star at a time would have a sadly imperfect view of the beauties of the

midnight skies, even after looking patiently at a thousand stars in succession. The man whose vision was so limited that he could only see, through a glass, a few inches at a time of a fine painting, would hardly have a correct conception of the picture as a whole, when he had been carefully over all the canvas. Fine scenery is not to be looked at in its several parts alone—its separate hills and trees and streams noted singly; it must be reviewed in all the beauty of its harmonious variety from a point above the whole. A Swiss guide while piloting a party of tourists towards one of the Alpine summits halted them at a certain point of their ascent, saying, as he turned their attention down over the way already passed, "Here is the place for us to look back." And below them the travellers saw an extended landscape, many beauties of which were unnoticed while they struggled upwards, and would be concealed from sight at a loftier elevation. That halt gave to the tourists a new sense of the loveliness of their surroundings, and a fresh conception of the relative position of the hamlets and valleys and glaciers and beetling crags they had observed in passing. Now for the first time they knew something of that region in its entirety.

So there are points in every mental journey where gain is found in looking back—gain through a new

sense of the mutual relations of the several parts of a harmonious whole. The child, who has been tediously spelling single words in long columns for days and weeks, has a fresh and delightful conception of the meaning of printed words, when he is made to review the last fifteen he has spelled out, and he finds them to form the sentence, "The-eyes-of-the-Lord-are-in-every-place-, beholding-the-evil and-the-good." A similar but more important discovery is made by one reviewing the lessons of any month, or quarter, or year, in the Sunday-school. The connection and relations of these lessons cannot be shown except in review. Those who fail to review them fail to perceive the beauty they exhibit, and the truth they teach as a series. As well might one set a child to examine the varied irregular bits of a dissected map, or a mosaic picture, without putting them together and seeing what they form when united, as to conduct a class, or a Sunday-school, with only an examination of each week's lesson by itself, and never a review of the teachings of a special term.

4. *A review helps forward those who are, from any cause, in the background.*

As a superintendent was on his way, with a friend, to church and Sunday-school, a plaintive voice was

heard behind, crying, "Papa, *wait !* Papa, *wait !*" Looking back, the superintendent saw his little son, hurrying after him, unable to overtake him, and crying because of his inability. Of course the father stopped as soon as he heard the call, and he waited until the little fellow came up with him. "Why didn't you stop before?" asked the child, sobbing in his grief at being so long behind. "Because I didn't know you were there," said the loving father, tenderly. "But, *why didn't you look back?*" asked the boy, reproachfully. *That* question the father could not answer satisfactorily. The truth was he had been so much interested in his own conversation and plans, he had forgotten that little feet, unable to keep up with his long strides, might be pattering after him; so he had not looked back, and his son was left unnoticed for the time. The call of that son sounded in the father's ears as suggestive of the question from many a scholar to his Sunday-school teacher, when the latter hurries on from week to week with never an hour of review or of re-explanation. The little ones cannot keep up with those older—the weaker with those stronger; hence they seem hopelessly behind, and their cry is that of the child struggling after his father on the village street, "Why don't you look back? Why don't you look back?" Unless

you do look back very often in your Sunday-school teaching, and help forward those who are behind, more or less of the scholars will be unable to keep up with you, and will count themselves neglected if not forgotten by their teacher.

As Mr. Fitch says, "We do not come to the Sunday-school so much that we may *give* lessons, as that the children may receive them. Let us determine, therefore, that however little we teach, the whole of that little shall be learnt. Let us stop and recapitulate very often, especially if the class seems languid and indifferent; let us think no time lost which is spent in satisfying ourselves that what has been said is understood, and that we are making sure of our ground as we are going on. . . . And let us determine at every step to secure that the whole of the children are advancing with us."

Perhaps an entire class is behind hand because of its incompetent teacher. The scholars are bright enough, but their teacher has failed to understand the lessons, or to give an intelligent idea of them. In such a case the scholars gain not a little from a superintendent's or pastor's review of the lessons before the school. Partial teaching on the first examination is in a measure atoned for on the review. The backward scholars are given a new chance, and those

poorly cared for before receive a new and better ministry.

5. Familiar truths have a special attraction to scholars.

“Sing ‘Jesus loves me, this I know,’” asks a little girl, morning after morning at family worship. She wants that hymn sung because she knows that hymn. She never tires of it from hearing it over and over again; but it is all the sweeter to her because she is familiar with its every line and strain, and is sure of her proper part in it. She is not alone among children in this feeling. It is a great mistake to suppose that children always want new hymns, new stories, new toys, new books. Usually the hymn they love best is the hymn they know best; the story they call for oftenest is the one that has been oftenest told them. The old and shabby doll is generally preferred to a doll new and better dressed; and the torn book, whose every page and picture is thumbed with using, is in many cases better liked than a book with strange pictures and unknown stories. Nor are children alone in this attachment to what has once impressed their minds, and with which they are pleasantly familiar. Daniel Webster never tired of “Gray’s Elegy.” Abraham Lincoln was always ready to hear again:

“O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?”

Few men of culture would object to reading a book of Homer, an ode of Horace, a play of Shakspeare, a canto of Dante or Milton, or a page of Tennyson or Longfellow, on the ground that they had read it before. A really good thing is all the more attractive to one familiar with its best features.

Of course it must be a good thing to be truly attractive; and it is not to be senselessly and eternally reiterated. But as to the value of Bible truths there need be no doubt, and as to too frequent reviews of them there is surely as yet little danger. The youngest scholars will be pleased to hear about themes of which they already know something. They will be glad when questions are put which they can answer. And the older and more intelligent will rejoice anew in every timely presentation of truths once found immeasurably precious.

6. *The surest test of scholars' proficiency is found in reviews.*

It is well to know what has been learned by a scholar, a class, or a school, in a given period. This discovery can best be made through reviews. In the army, occasional inspections and reviews test the thoroughness of daily drill in the "school of the soldier," the "school of the company," and the "school

of the battalion." Those troops are counted best suited to hard service of marching and fighting who appear best in parade-marching, who best handle their weapons, who are cleanliest in person, neatest in dress and equipment, promptest in action, and most accurate in required movements. The ordeal of battle rarely reverses the decision of the judicious inspecting and reviewing officers as to the character and attainments of those passed upon.

In college life, the term, and annual, and biennial examinations show who are true scholars, as do no ordinary class-room recitations. A student may "pony," or gloss, or shirk along over daily lesson tasks without destroying his college standing; but he can hardly come up to the trial of a review of the studies of a term, or of one or two years, without showing the stuff of which he is made, and proving his real acquirements in the knowledge sought by him. Indeed, some of our best American colleges are proposing to confer degrees at the close of a college course, only on those who then pass successfully a rigid examination on the studies of the entire curriculum. In the academy, or the common school, examination-day is the day most dreaded by the poorly-furnished pupil, and most valued by the discerning teacher—as showing what progress the pupil

has made; how far the teacher's work has been fruitful.

Why, then, should there be no reviews or inspection of those, in the Sunday-school army, who are training, in the school of the soul, for hard-fighting in the battle of life, in the service of the Captain of our salvation? Why should the student of God's Word, in the Bible-college, have not even an annual or a biennial examination, to show if their minds retain aught of that they have been seeking to learn? Why should the Sunday-schools have never an examination, to test and fasten the Scripture knowledge of their scholars, young and old?

Some scholars would doubtless be surprised themselves by the results of their examination in a review. They know less than they suppose. They gained nothing in study when they took it for granted they were storing their minds richly. It would be well for them to find this out. Not a few teachers would be amazed and ashamed to learn how ignorant their scholars are of the weightiest truths in lessons they have assumed to teach them. The absence of a review has kept them in sad ignorance of their own inefficiency. It is time they learned it. So, many a superintendent and pastor would learn through review exercises what they ought to know of the lack in their

Sunday-schools. On the other hand, scholars, teachers, superintendents, and pastors would in many cases be surprised and delighted at the actual attainment made through the study of a series of lessons, if they applied to it the sure test of a review. If progress has been made it ought to be known. If it is lacking that fact should stand out. A review is the only infallible test. The school that never has that is to be pitied.

WHEN AND HOW TO REVIEW.

The importance of Sunday-school reviews being admitted, the question recurs as to their times and methods. If the teachings of the Sunday-school are to be reviewed, when and how shall this work be done?

Reviews should be at both stated and occasional seasons. Set times should be given to them, that they may be prepared for, and receive undivided attention. They should be also occasional and unexpected, the better to test the learner's knowledge in the ground covered by them.

The wise methods of review are as various as are their fitting seasons. They may be conducted in the class, or from the desk; by the teacher, the superintendent, or the pastor. They may include the recitation of memorized passages, the free answering of questions on the teachings of the course, or both combined. Almost any mode of review is better than no way; as almost any time of review is better than no time.

WEEKLY REVIEWS.

Reviewing should be as frequent as teaching. Once a week is counted seldom enough for Sunday-school teaching. It is seldom enough for reviewing what is taught. In the class, if not from the desk, there should be some exercise of review every time a Sunday-school assembles. If there must be a choice, it would be better to have two Sundays of review to one of teaching new truths; rather than two Sundays of teaching to one of reviewing. But new truth can be taught each Sunday without the neglect of reviews.

WEEKLY REVIEWS IN THE CLASS.

It is well for a teacher to briefly review the lesson of the day at the close of each school session. The more important points touched in the first examination of the lesson are worthy of repetition, to fasten them in the memory, to give them new prominence, and to show their mutual relations. Five minutes spent in this way, before the school closes, will often be more effective in teaching the truth of the day's

lesson, and giving the scholars a sense of it as a whole, than all the time before taken. For lack of this kind of review many a class separates without a clear idea and positive impression of the lesson in the mind of one of its scholars. This brief review need not interfere with earnest words from the teacher in the spiritual application of the lesson, if he desires to close with them. They can as well follow the review as follow the first statement of the lesson truths. However brief is the time allotted to the lesson, a share of that time should be given to review. It is better to say one thing twice over, or ten times over, and have it understood and remembered, than to say two things, or ten, but once, and have them misconceived or quickly forgotten. Whatever is worth teaching to a scholar is worth reviewing. Indeed if it is not reviewed it can hardly be said to be taught. And subsequent reviews are more likely to be effective through a prompt review on the day of first teaching.

A few minutes may profitably be given to a review of the last Sunday's lesson, at the opening of each class recitation. Scholars who learned that lesson well have it now but faintly, if at all, in mind. A review will bring it up afresh. Its truths are perhaps essential to a full understanding of to-day's lesson.

At all events it is important to keep up the connection of the series of lessons. The title, the topic, the "golden text,"* and the main incidents, or the more prominent teachings of last week's lesson may be brought out, by a few wise questions from the teacher, in a very brief time, as the opening class exercise. The former lesson is then distinctly in mind. The new lesson can be all the better recited and understood in consequence. Dr. Vincent's unqualified counsel to teachers is, "Every Sabbath review the lesson of the preceding week." Mr. Fitch says, out of his personal experience, "I always made it a practice, in my own class, at a Sunday-school, not only to recapitulate the lesson just taught, but also to spend the first ten minutes of every Sunday afternoon in giving a few questions on the lesson of the preceding Sunday. I kept a record of those who answered best, and rewarded them by an extra mark or ticket. With elder boys, also, I always required the substance of last Sunday's lesson to be written down on paper in the course of the week, and brought to me each Sunday. One consequence of this was, that, some of the boys brought note-books with them; and it is certain that far closer attention was paid to

* A motto Bible text, in common use with the Uniform Lessons.

my teaching than before. Of course, this plan involves the necessity of some system and method, and of some little trouble too ; for all the papers require to be taken home and read by the teacher. But of one thing we may be quite sure ; no one of us, child or man, ever takes pains to grasp a subject, or fasten it in our memories, unless we expect in some way to find a use for it hereafter : so if we wish to get a real effort of attention from children, we must do it by leading them to expect that their knowledge will be asked for again ; by showing them that when we have once taught a thing we do not forget it, but are sure to return to it ; it may be half an hour hence, or it may be a week hence, but at any rate certainly and systematically."

Where a school has two sessions on Sunday, the first session may be given to the first recitation of the lesson, and the second to its review. But the opening and closing class reviews in a single session are not impracticable. Many a parent has this feature in family worship every morning in the week. He questions the children, before reading, on the Scripture of yesterday. Briefly he brings out in this way the outline of the former passage. After reading, he questions on the passage just read. So each passage is fastened in the mind, and the connection of

the series of readings is kept up unbroken. Those who have tried it know that this method takes very little extra time, while it adds greatly to the interest and profit of daily Bible-reading in the household.

SUPERINTENDENT'S WEEKLY REVIEW.

After the class recitations the superintendent can review the school as a whole on the lesson of the day. While no superintendent's review can do the work of the class teacher with his scholars singly, there are advantages in a general review from the desk. Unity in the school thought and teaching is thereby secured. One view of the lesson is given alike to all. The lack in classes poorest taught is in a measure supplied by the instruction of the superintendent—who ought to be the best teacher in the school. New prominence can be thus given to the most important truths of the day's lesson; and fresh beauties in it can be disclosed. What the superintendent points out as true and precious is most likely to be accepted without question; and what the school collectively receives shapes the school character, and influences all its membership.

But not every talk of a superintendent on the lesson at the close of the school session is a review of

that lesson. The superintendent may prefer to give his original *view* of it, rather than to conduct a *review* of it as already studied in the school. Perhaps he is interested in a single train of thought suggested by the lesson, which he wishes to pursue during all the time of his speaking. He has an address to make, but no review to conduct. Possibly he thinks more of making a spiritual impression on unconverted scholars, or on visitors who are there for the day, by an exhortation, or a pointed illustration, than of reviewing the lesson which the school has been studying. A review is not incumbent on him, if he thinks it unadvisable; but he should have clearly in mind beforehand just what his work is, and to that he should adhere. If he aims at a review, he should not indulge in a speech on the most important theme which the topic of the day suggests to him, nor attempt the work of a general evangelist by a sermon which is in no sense a re-exhibit of the lesson. He may, in reviewing the lesson, give new emphasis to particular points in it, and illustrate and enforce that which he thinks most important, or fears has been under-estimated; but his work must be in the line of *review*, or his school has no review by his help that day.

No one plan is best for all schools. The superin-

tendent may call on the school for the title, golden text, and main facts of the lesson, as the teacher calls for them in the class. By wise and well considered questions, he can bring out such of the lesson teachings as he would make prominent, and on these he can comment at pleasure. He can have on his blackboard a central thought, a suggestive sentence, or an appropriate emblem displayed before the school, or he may use the blackboard freely as he goes on with his review; only he must see to it that all these things are in the line of review, if it is a review he attempts.

One way of bringing out for review what has been already taught in the classes, is by the superintendent calling on the teachers severally from the desk (say five or ten of them in succession), to give briefly the thought or truth from the lesson they have sought to leave with their scholars; he writing down these teachings as given, accompanying them with fitting comments, and perhaps adding another thought which he would make the concluding one of the day. This plan has the advantage of stimulating and reviewing the teachers. If they are liable to be called on before all the school, at the close of the session, to say just what they have taught, they are more likely to notice as they go on what it is they are teaching; and too many teachers fail to know what is the lead-

ing thought—if indeed they recognize any thought—in the lesson they have in hand. It trains teachers too to put a truth concisely and with precision ; if they must state it to go down on the blackboard in a brief sentence. The superintendent can aid them in this line, by re-stating more compactly the substance of their answer as he writes it out. In process of time they will become better skilled in this mode of reply, and will be the more useful teachers in consequence. The variety of topics furnished by a single lesson will often surprise the superintendent and teachers, and impress the entire school with a new sense of the fulness and richness of that passage of God's Word. Each class has special needs. A good teacher will draw out, from the exhaustless Bible treasury, that which is best for his scholars. This is well ; but there is also an advantage in his learning how many things besides are to be found in the lesson which has furnished such good to those of his charge. Sometimes also a pastor or superintendent will be surprised to see how his teachers have failed of perceiving what *he* counts the most precious thought of all the lesson. There is thus an opportunity for him to point them to that.

This method in actual practice works well. Schools which have long tried it find few difficulties in its use,

and are convinced of its advantages. Those who, from outside, have seen it on trial view it favourably. Take, for illustration, a lesson of the International Series—Jacob at Bethel, Genesis xxviii. 10–22. A few questions from the superintendent, in his closing review, would connect this lesson with those before studied. The places named could be pointed out on the map. The main facts of the narrative would be given in response to questions. Comment could be made on any of these points as they came up. Teachers, being asked as to the practical lessons pressed by them, would perhaps, one after another, give such replies as these:—

“God is nearest when his children need him most.”

“Our fathers’ God may be our God.”

“God’s blessings come by his grace, not by our merit.”

“Heaven is open to those whose eyes God opens.”

“New blessings call for fresh tokens of gratitude.”

“Angels watch us, by night as well as day.”

“The ladder to heaven starts from close by us.”

“Giving to God is a duty.”

“God’s house is wherever God is.”

“Prayers go up and blessings come down by Jesus Christ.”

The superintendent could write out any or all of these answers on the blackboard as they were given, and have them read aloud by the school together. Turning the board he could show there displayed simply the exclamation of Jacob :

“ Surely the Lord is in THIS place ! ”

With a few words in enforcement of this solemn thought, and the recital of the text by the school, the lesson could be left for that day. Or, instead of the blackboard exhibit of Jacob's words, the golden text for the day might be recited, in closing,—

“ And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

PASTOR'S WEEKLY REVIEW.

In some schools the pastor comes in every Sunday, to conduct the review and add timely words at the close of the session. Where the Sunday-school is counted as a regular service of the sanctuary, occupying the full forenoon or afternoon, a review of the lesson by the pastor is particularly desirable as preliminary to his enforcement of its teachings. The weekly review by Dr. W. E. Knox, in the Sunday-

school of his former parish, at Rome, N. Y., was peculiarly instructive and helpful. Under the "graduated," as distinct from the "uniform," system of lessons, five different themes were studied at the same time in that school, yet the pastor reviewed these lessons together, each Sunday, in such a way as to show a common train of thought to all, or to exhibit their relation to a common central truth. For instance ; the lessons for one Sunday were :—

Jesus Walking on the Waters. Matt. xiv. 24–31.

The Prodigal Son. Luke xv. 14–19.

Invitation to the Water of Life. John vii. 37–41.

The Danger of Riches. Mark x. 23–31.

Death of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts v. 1–11.

The pastor, in reviewing, grouped these under a common head, as follows :—

Conversion : What is it ?

1. The cry of a perishing soul. "Lord, save me!"
2. The resolve of a hungry soul. "I will arise and go to my father."
3. The coming of a thirsty soul. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."
4. The soul leaving all for Christ. "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee."

5. The soul greatly fearing to sin. "Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things."

I. How simple the act of conversion for children. It is a cry; a return; the taking what is offered; the giving up everything for Jesus; the fearing to sin.

II. Yet the work of salvation how divine. Who but God can still the tempest, receive the sinner, feed the soul, be all in all to the needy, or keep the heart pure?

The fact that this method of reviewing was continued by Mr. Knox, for months together, without any failure to find a common thread through the five lessons of the day, shows that the consecutive lessons of any series for a month or quarter can be reviewed together harmoniously, through an intelligent study of them to this end by the superintendent or pastor.

MONTHLY REVIEWS.

Monthly reviews are more common than weekly reviews in the Sunday-school. Many a pastor who does not care to visit his Sunday-school each week, is glad to visit and review it once a month. The monthly Sunday-school concert, or general-exercise meeting of the month, is sometimes given to a lesson review. This meeting often takes the place of the ordinary second church service, in the afternoon or evening, especially in country parishes, bringing the Sunday-school before the general congregation, where its proficiency and progress in study may be shown through general exercises of review on the lessons of the month. Proof texts on the leading theme or special teachings of these lessons are sometimes called for in the concert, the scholars selecting texts to memorize and recite, in response to previously assigned questions. Or a formal exercise of review is arranged for the concert.

A good example of a concert review exercise, as arranged by John B. Smith, of East Hartford, Conn., on the lessons of the Uniform Series for January,

1872, was published in the "National Sunday-School Teacher" of that date. The lessons and golden texts for the month were,

Lessons.

Golden Texts.

The Exalted Saviour. Acts ii. 32-41. Acts ii. 36.
The Eternal Mediator. Heb. iv. 11-16. Heb. iv. 14.
The All-Sufficient Lord. 2 Cor. xii. 1-10. 2 Cor. xii. 9.
The Glorified Son of Man. Rev. i. 12-20. Rev. i. 18.

The following extracts will show the character and form of the exercise:—

QUESTION. Our lessons for the month of January consist of one sermon and three letters. Can you tell me who was the preacher of the sermon?

ANSWER. Peter.

Q. And who wrote the letters?

A. Paul and John.

Q. Under which head comes the first lesson?

A. The sermon.

Q. Who did you say preached it?

A. Peter.

Q. Who were his audience?

A. "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judca, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene,

and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians."

Q. When was the occasion of this sermon?

A. The day of Pentecost.

Q. What is the title of our lesson on this sermon?

A. The Exalted Saviour.

Q. What is the first verse?

A. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

Q. What is the golden text?

A. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Q. Did the preacher speak of sin in general, or did he bring home personal sin to those before him?

A. He said: "That same Jesus whom ye have crucified."

Q. What was the result of this preaching on his hearers?

A. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart."

Q. Did the people then praise and forget the sermon?

A. No, they "said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Q. How long did the young converts wait before

they confessed their new faith in Jesus whom they had crucified?

A. "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

The second, third, and fourth lessons of the series were similarly reviewed. Then came this recapitulation and application of the four:—

Q. Now will the whole school tell what is the title of our first lesson this month?

A. The Exalted Saviour.

Q. What is the title of the second lesson?

A. The Eternal Mediator.

Q. Of the third?

A. The All-Sufficient Lord.

Q. Of the fourth?

A. The Glorified Son of Man.

Q. To whom is Jesus offered as the exalted Saviour?

A. To every one.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus *every* knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that *every* tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

(The superintendent reads with the school the words of Peter at the reception of Cornelius, from Acts x. 34-43.)

Q. For whom is Jesus Christ the eternal Mediator?

A. For penitent sinners.

“If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

(The parable of the Pharisee and the publican, from Luke xviii. 9-14, is read.)

Q. For whom is Christ the all-sufficient Lord?

A. To all who believe on him.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

(The narrative of the jailor’s conversion, Acts xvi. 25-34, is read.)

Q. Who shall in the end rejoice in Jesus as the glorified Son of man?

A. Let John the revelator, who asked an angel who these were, tell us the angel’s answer.

(The entire school reads, or recites, from Revelation vii. 9-17 :

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white

robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," &c.)

Even where the concert is not given specifically to review exercises, its topical recitations may be on a theme kindred to the studies of the month, and so aid in giving an exhibit of the relation of the lessons to one another, which will add to the effectiveness and interest of a general review when that is attempted. Thus if the month's lessons are about Abraham, or Moses, or Solomon, the concert recitations may give an outline of the life of the same person in Bible language. If the lessons are about Joseph in Egypt, or Daniel in Babylon, the recitations may be about Egypt, or Babylon. If the lessons tell of Elijah, the recitations may tell of the Prophets of Israel. If Jesus in the flesh is presented in the lessons, the Loving, or the Helping Saviour may be exhibited in the recitations. Lessons on our Lord after his resurrection may be accompanied by recitations on the Ever-Living Saviour. With lessons on the miracles, may come recitations on Faith. With lessons enjoining special duties, may be given recitations on the Commandments.

It is certainly undesirable to allow more than a full

month to pass without some form of general review—review-questions from the superintendent's desk—if the lessons are to be kept well in mind by the school. Even though no full review of the series of lessons is attempted oftener than once in a quarter, there is an advantage in briefly examining the school on its lessons month by month, as preliminary and helpful to the quarterly review. The more reviews the better, within limits yet recognized as extreme.

QUARTERLY REVIEWS.

The fact that the plan of the International Lessons provides for a Sunday of review once in three months, gives peculiar prominence to quarterly review exercises. Hints as to the nature and method of such exercises are, consequently, more common and more in demand than suggestions as to reviews at lesser intervals. Once in three months is certainly seldom enough to stop, in a school, and inquire what has been learned, and how it is valued; what has been retained, and what is forgotten of the lessons passed over. If reviews are attempted at no other time they should be on quarter-day. Yet those who have them quarterly will soon come to want them oftener.

The quarterly, like the weekly or monthly review may be conducted in the class by the teacher, or from the desk by the superintendent or pastor. The best plan includes both forms of exercise. The teachers need to review their classes, that they may reach their scholars singly. The superintendent ought also to handle his school as a whole, to secure unity of im-

pression. Neither method by itself does all the work desired. Where a Sunday-school has two sessions a day, the first session can be given on quarter-day, to class reviews, and the second to reviews from the desk. Or a school can give its ordinary hour to class reviews, and have an extra session, in the afternoon or evening, as on concert Sunday, for the general review. If the school is limited to a single session, a portion of the review-hour can be given to the teachers, and the remainder to the superintendent.

In the class or in the desk the review should not attempt too much. A review is not mere reiteration. To simply repeat all the questions of the twelve lessons of a quarter would be as unprofitable an exercise as it would be tedious, by no means deserving the name of review. The man climbing a mountain, who looks back to review his course, does not track with his eyes each step of the path he has thus far trod ; but he sweeps over the entire region below with rapid glances, gaining a new understanding of the way he has passed, because he sees it as a whole instead of confining his attention to its varied and separate parts. "It would be to miss the great value of a review," says Dr. John Hall, "to spend all or even most of the time in the rehearsal by question and answer of the dry, bare facts, though these may be, indeed must

be, recalled. . . . After a stranger has examined the great buildings and principal streets of a city which he visits, it is an immense help to him to get on an eminence, survey the whole, and take into his mind the general look and plan of the place. A good review ought to give a corresponding general idea of the natural relation of all the portions which have been studied in detail."

Those portions of the lessons which were *memorized* in their first study, may be brought out afresh in the review, and made effective in giving a new conception of the lesson series as a whole. This is peculiarly true of what is called the "international," or "central," or "golden" text, which ordinarily states or suggests the choicest truth of the lesson. The subjects, of the lessons severally, as indicated in their titles, and topics, are also worthy of a place in the review. Indeed if the quarterly review did nothing more than to fasten in the minds of teachers and scholars, the titles, topics, and golden texts of the lessons they have been over, it would do a great work, and well repay the time and labour it cost; for few Sunday-schools can pass a good examination even thus far in their lessons; none can where thorough reviewing is not practiced. But the quarterly review well conducted accomplishes more than the fastening in the mind of memorized portions

of the lessons. It exhibits those lessons anew so that they are more clearly understood and more highly prized, as well as better remembered. It is well said, that "the art of reviewing successfully is the art of getting, at each repetition, the fresh interest of a first study, and without losing any of the knowledge gained at the first, adding, at each repetition, something wholly new. A review should be what the word imports, a second examination and study, a re-viewing of the whole subject."*

NO REVIEW WITHOUT A PLAN.

No Sunday-school exercise requires more careful preparation and thorough study, on the part of him who conducts it, than the quarterly review. The lessons of three months cannot be taken up and re-examined profitably at random. To use a single hour to advantage, in going over so much ground, every step must be well considered and wisely taken. The teacher who comes into his class on quarter-day with no thoroughly digested plan of review is likely to waste his time with his class, however fully he may occupy the hour. So of the superintendent with his school. Yet, in quarterly, as in weekly, reviews no one plan

* "National Sunday-School Teacher."

will answer for every class or for all schools. Each reviewer must have his own plan. It is to secure that, that preliminary study is necessary.

The first thing, in making ready for a quarterly review, is for the reviewer to prayerfully look over all the lessons of the quarter, and decide in what way they can best be considered as a whole, in the class or school for which he is responsible. Perhaps they are to be viewed historically; as the story of one man, one family, one nation, or of two distinct and contrasted peoples. If so, he is to decide what great teachings of the history he is to newly bring out. They may be seen to all illustrate one great truth, such as "The special providences of God," or, "Jesus our sympathizing Saviour." Then their re-examination is a simpler matter. Possibly they are better shown in their successive relations to some central idea, such as "Holiness.—Who should be holy? Why to be holy? How to be holy." In this case the reviewer is to link them properly as parts of the great chain. The line of review in his class or school, he is to decide on, and he cannot make this decision until he has the whole subject clearly in his own mind, in what seems to him a natural and fitting order for those whom he would teach and review. It may be said to each reviewer, as Dr.

Hall says to each teacher, "It would be worth while to go over the lessons ten times if necessary, in order to get into your mind a clear, distinct, logical division, so that you can say that one, two, three, four, five, no matter how many points include the whole thing, and these points do not overlap one another, but taken by themselves and taken together they present the whole subject . . . in a lucid and memorable order. . . . The battle is half fought when you have got a distinct, clear, manageable, memorable division of the subject in your mind."

Frequently the review golden text for the quarter, named by the International Lesson Committee, presents a truth, or suggests a thought on which all the lessons for the quarter may well be strung. Thus the review text of the first quarter of 1873, on the opening lessons of the Bible, was,—“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” This suggested the thought, What has been told in these lessons? and why? The third quarter’s review text for the same year, on the first lessons in the earthly life of Jesus, tells the story of them all, in the words,—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ

Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” Perhaps a passage of Scripture is directly named by the Lesson Committee, as including a good plan of review. Thus, for the first quarter of 1874, the Song of Moses, from Exodus xv. 1–11, reviews God’s dealings with his people, which have been the theme of study for three months previous. A similar review passage is named for the second quarter of the same year, from Deuteronomy viii., where are rehearsed the divine mercies towards Israel, just studied in this series.

PLANS OF QUARTERLY CLASS REVIEW.

While class-reviews should be more particular and personal to each scholar than are the reviews of the school as a whole, it is important that the teacher’s quarterly examination of his class includes the points likely to be touched in the review from the desk, if such a review is to follow. If the superintendent or pastor is to call for the title, topic, golden text, or main incidents of the twelve lessons, the teacher should be sure that his scholars are familiar with these. In addition, he can make any application to his scholars individually, of the truths of these lessons, which he deems desirable. If no general review is to follow, the form of the class-review is of course wholly at the teacher’s option.

The various periodicals furnishing notes on the Uniform Lessons are giving quarter by quarter, valuable plans of review, and hints on methods of work in this line. Such helps are likely to multiply. They are worthy of study. While no one way is always the best, every good way is suggestively helpful to the thoughtful observer. Dr. Gregory, who has written on this theme perhaps more fully and clearly than any other American teacher, in opening the class reviews of the first quarter of 1872, on "Jesus after His Ascension," in the "National Sunday-School Teacher," suggests such questions to the scholars as these :—

"What is the great general aim of the lessons of this quarter ?

"Why ought we to learn what the Bible tells us of the character, acts, and words of Jesus after his ascension ?

"What was the topic of the *first* lesson ?

"What was the Scripture statement in regard to the 'exalted Saviour ?'

"What 'central truth' was drawn from the lesson ?

"Repeat the 'central text.'

"Show that this text and others in the lesson teach the central truth.

"Give any other Scripture proofs or illustrations

you can remember to show that Jesus is the exalted Saviour."

And so through the lessons of the quarter.

In reviewing, in the same magazine, the lessons of the second quarter of 1872, on "Elisha and Israel," Miss Timanus, in her infant class notes, states a truth as important to older scholars as to the youngest, when she says that in a quarterly review "the personal bearing of each lesson, rather than the points of biography or history" should be brought out by questioning. Thus:—

"1. What kind of a man was Elisha?

" "He was wise and great.'

"2. Who made him so wise and great?

" "God did.'

"3. You learned about a little slave girl, and the great soldier Naaman, several Sundays past. Which was the wiser of the two?"—

And so on.

"Faith Latimer," in similar notes on the same lessons, in the "Sunday-School Times," clusters the "personal bearings" of the twelve lessons under the two heads, "God will hear prayer," and "God will punish sin." She calls to mind the incidents of the lessons by the mention of their personages.

Her schedule of review, which might be sketched on the class slate, or merely used as a mental guide of the teacher's questions, is:—

PROPHETS. KINGS. SERVANTS.
MOTHERS. CHILDREN.
LEPERS.

GOD WILL HEAR PRAYER
PUNISH SIN.

She would run over the narrative elliptically, having the scholars fill in the missing words. Thus:—

“Here is a river. Standing there, are two ——. One strikes the water with a ——. They go over on dry ——. Suddenly there appeared a chariot of ——. One was taken up to ——. The other took up the fallen ——, and went back to the river ——.”

While thus reviewing the narrative, she shows from the stories of Elisha, the little maid, and the sick king Hezekiah, that God will hear prayer; from the mocking children, Gehazi, and the sinful nation, that God will punish sin. So the twelve lessons are reviewed as one.

A correspondent of the London "Sunday-School Teacher" describes his plan of class-review, which might be adapted to almost any series of lessons. He uses a slip of paper, or card board, about twenty-two inches long by four wide. A class slate or portable blackboard would answer the same purpose. This slip, or board, is divided into two columns. In the first column are entered, in large, distinct letters, the names and descent of the principal characters of the lessons under review. In the second column, in smaller letters, are inserted suggestive words, to call to mind the more important events in the life of each character named. The scholars successively are asked what they remember about the subject of one line on the review-card. If they do not respond readily, the truth is called to their mind by prompting questions or brief statements. For example, the card might show, as its opening words of review,

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <p>ABRAM.</p> <p>LOT.</p> | <p>HARAN. CANAAN. BETHEL. EGYPT. FAMINE.</p> <p>HERDMEN'S STRIFE. TENT TOWARDS SODOM.</p> |
|---------------------------|---|

The teacher could then ask Willie what he remembers of Abram. "Who called him?" "Where was he living?" "Whither was he to go?" Here might be applied the truth that God is constantly calling to us. When the story of Abram is sufficiently considered, the teacher could call on James to tell what he knows about Lot. "What was his relation to Abram?" "What first made trouble between Abram's and Lot's people?" "Towards what city did Lot remove?" etc., etc.

In the "Baptist Teacher," Dr. Pepper gives always a plan for the entire lessons of the quarter, similar to that which he gives for the lesson of each week. For example, for the second quarter of 1873, including the lessons concerning Jacob and Joseph, he groups the lessons under four divisions, as follows:—

"1. Alienation. Lessons I-III.

"2. Separation. Lessons IV-VI.

"3. Reconciliation. Lessons VII, VIII.

"4. Union. Lessons IX-XII."

His summary of the teachings is, — "Through conflict into peace; through toil into rest; through gloom into light."

He recommends for memorizing, Hebrews xi. 20-22, 39, 40,— "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau," etc.

His golden text is the quarterly review text of the series, Prov. iv. 18,—“The path of the just is as the shining light,” etc.

A superintendent in Galesburg, Ill., Mr. Leach, has described in the last named paper, a method of public class-review, having the advantage of separate class examination in a harmonious plan for the entire school. In reviewing Twelve Lessons on Daniel, he subdivided the subjects of the series, so as to give to each of twenty-five classes a portion. To one he assigned the general geography of the lessons; to another the description of Babylon; to another the characteristics of the Jewish religion in the period of the captivity; to another the religion of the Persians; to another the history of the Medo-Persian kings, etc. He requested each teacher to prepare four or five questions, covering the more important points of his special theme, to put to his class on review-day. The review was conducted class-wise, by the teachers; but openly as if from the superintendent's desk. Each teacher in turn reviewed his or her class in the presence of all the others. So every teacher “had the benefit of the style, the drill, and the quality of all the others” in this exercise. The younger scholars showed how well they could memorize Scripture texts, and the older ones gave

beautifully appropriate answers, in Bible language, to pointed questions from their teachers. Through this method the scholars were reached by their teachers severally ; but the lesson was reviewed as a whole by the school collectively.

From these suggestions and examples it will be seen that a quarterly review exercise in the class may be as compact, as comprehensive, as harmonious, and as complete an exhibit of the twelve lessons under examination as can be that of any single lesson first taught. But such an exhibit needs prayerful and studious preparation, with the aid of the best helps the teacher can secure from all sources within his reach.

PLANS OF QUARTERLY DESK REVIEW.

The methods of successful quarterly review from the desk, by the superintendent, depend mainly upon the plan of ordinary teaching and weekly review in the school. If the school is accustomed to recite, each week, the title and topic and golden text of the lesson, there will be no difficulty in bringing these out on quarter-day. If, however, these points were not before made prominent, they will hardly be given promptly at that time. So of other points of review. They must be selected in accordance with the train-

ing of the particular school. Questions may be safely put to scholars who have been well taught, that would be entirely out of place for those without such teaching. Hence, a good plan of quarterly review presupposes instruction in the line followed by it; or it will suggest such training to those to whom it is new.

The main facts of the lessons are of course supposed to be known to all who have been over them. On them questions can be asked freely. But the superintendent is to decide in what line of thought he is to present those facts in the quarterly review exercise, and he can call them up conformably to his plan. They are the separate building blocks with which he may shape a structure according to his mind. Take, for example, the quarter's lessons on Israel and Joseph. The superintendent might decide to bring out in review this thought, "It is safe only and always to do right." His questions could then recall the facts concerning Jacob deceiving his father and being deceived by his sons; the guilt of the brethren of Joseph disclosed years after they counted it covered, and in another land than their home; the progress and final success of Joseph, in spite of the envy and malice of his brothers, the hardness of heart of the Ishmaelites, and the vile-

ness and perjury of his Egyptian enemies. Successive golden texts of the series which bear on the selected truth might be recited and emphasized:—"There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "Be sure your sin will find you out." The quarterly golden text would have a new meaning, as an encouragement to well-doers, in the light of the truth presented in the review: "The path of the *just* is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The facts and the texts now recited were all learned before; but possibly they were not before seen in their bearing on the line of thought taken in the superintendent's review, and enforced and illustrated by his remarks.

Perhaps the superintendent, in reviewing, would prefer to bring out the idea of "Joseph as a type of Christ." In this case he would naturally recall those facts which show Joseph loved of his parents and rejected of his brethren; his messages disbelieved; himself sold; sentenced to death; away from his

home in a land of strangers, to save the lives of the perishing; raised from the pit to the throne; forgiving those who wronged him; mediating between them and the king; securing for them a home in the kingdom where he rules. The golden texts would need special comment to show their connection with this view of the spiritual signification of the lessons; yet they would be found in place in such a review. The rejection of Christ will be shown before all the world: "Be sure your sin will find you out." Those who have rejected Christ will stand speechless before him: "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence." By Christ alone are any counted just. Those who follow him "shall not walk in darkness:" "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Yet again, the superintendent might wish to review the quarter's lessons under several heads, having a mutual relation to a common theme. Thus:-

REVEALING HIMSELF TO JACOB.
HIS PLANS TO JOSEPH.

GOD REWARDING THE SINS OF JACOB AND HIS ELDER SONS.
THE FAITH AND UPRIGHTNESS OF JOSEPH.

REDEEMING THE SINFUL SONS OF ISRAEL.
THE FAMISHING EGYPTIANS.

Here again the facts and golden texts would be differently brought out and used, and another impression produced through them. So in various ways the same lessons of any quarter may be reviewed in the line of the superintendent's well considered plan, and the entire school be carried along in it through his questioning and comments.

Sometimes the superintendent desires to learn the thoughts and test the knowledge of his school, on the lessons of the quarter, by securing questions from them on its points of interest or difficulty. He wants to shape his plan of review to their needs. He would have them take an active part in its preparation, as well as in its using. Eben Shute, of Boston, has experimented successfully in this line. He prepares slips of writing paper, of the size of a half sheet of commercial note, with a printed heading, as follows :—

QUESTION PAPER FOR QUARTERLY REVIEW,

MARCH 30, 1873.

Each scholar is invited to write on the blank space below a question on any one of the lessons for the past quarter. Please give the date on which the lesson was studied. The subjects have been as follows :—

Jan. 5. The Creation, . . . Gen. i. 1, 26-31.

" 12. In Eden, . . . Gen. ii. 15-25.

. ;

Ample space is left below for the date of the lesson in question, and for the question itself. These slips are distributed a Sunday or two before quarter-day to teachers and scholars, with the request that they be returned to the superintendent in season for him to examine them before that occasion. When the slips are all in his hands, with the questions on them, the superintendent can arrange them by their dates, and afterwards shape his plan of review to their tenor and scope. He may use only a portion of the questions, rejecting the rest, if he sees a reason for so doing. The same inquiry will be often repeated, and one answer will suffice for it. On review-day these questions may be brought in in their proper place in the plan of the superintendent's review; he answering them himself, or—which is usually better—calling on some one in the school to answer them severally, as they are read. The disclosure, which is made by this method of review, of the ignorance and wants of the school on the theme of the quarter's lessons, will usually startle the superintendent, and give him cause for thankfulness that he did not take too much for granted as to the faithfulness of his teachers, or the attainments of his scholars. He will also be stimulated and helped by many of the questions which come up to him on these slips. He will have no lack of points of comment

and review. As showing the character of questions called out by this method of review, the following are given from a collection of slips received on the first quarter-day of 1873 :

“Was Adam ever a boy? or was he created a man?”

“How were the evening and the morning distinguished in the first three days of the creation, as the sun and moon were not created until the fourth day?”

“What did Cain and Abel talk about?”

“When we ‘pitch our tents towards Sodom,’ may we always expect the good angels to come to warn us?”

“Why was the faith of Abraham tested so many times by God?”

“Did God act impartially in his dealings with Jacob and Esau?”

“Was Jacob a Christian when he was at Bethel?”

Another method of quarterly review introduces other portions of Scripture, as illustrative of the truths brought out in the facts of the quarter’s lessons. The scholars are set to re-examine those lessons, and find in them a correspondence with truths elsewhere declared in the Bible. For instance, Rev. E. C.

Starr, of Waseca, Minn., in reviewing Twelve Lessons on Daniel, called on his school to compare those lessons with the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, and note the examples given in the lessons of such characters as Christ pronounced blessed; also of the opposite characters; and of the fitting reward or punishment that met them. He suggests that the commandments might thus be brought out in comparison with lessons on personal conduct or duty. And so with the teachings of our Lord Jesus; his works of ministry; the Psalms; the Proverbs, in conjunction with other series of lessons.

A common and a simple order of quarterly review exercises is the recitation of memorized portions of the lessons, by designated members of the school, according to the method of a Sunday-school concert, as already named under the head of monthly reviews. While this is but a partial review at the best, it is decidedly better than no review, and some schools will attempt it who would not attempt one more thorough and complete. It gives a general exhibit of the quarter's lessons, and it fastens in the minds of all those texts which they personally recite. In this way the lessons may be shown in their common teaching of one great truth, in their more important

separate teachings, or by their titles and topics and golden texts in their order.

For instance, Twelve Lessons on Elisha and Israel, were seen to all teach this truth: "God a Power in Human Affairs." The superintendent in reviewing them, selected passages from the successive lessons to emphasize this thought, and assigned them to particular classes for recitation. On quarter-day these recitations were given in response to his questions. So one great truth was exhibited in every recitation of the review exercise. Again, Twelve Lessons in Genesis were reviewed in a concert exercise which comprised a running outline of their narrative, through selected and assigned verses, without the attempt to show the same truth in all. The thread of their story rather than the teaching of their series was made prominent in the review. Yet again, the titles and golden texts of Twelve Lessons on Israel and Joseph were recited consecutively in review, in the simple endeavour to refresh the mind with their words—not to enforce the teachings or story of the quarter's course.

While these review recitations of memorized passages have their value, it would be surely unwise to limit to them the review exercises of quarter-day.

Such recitations are well as accompanying a general examination of the school in its knowledge of the quarter's lesson, or as supplemental to thorough class reviews. In the reviews conducted by Henry P. Haven, of New London, Conn., a member of the International Lesson Committee, who is superintendent of both a church Sunday-school in the city and a neighbourhood Sunday-school in the country, a combination of the methods named is secured. On quarter-day his teachers have a brief space of time for the review of their classes severally. Then he calls for the titles and topics of the twelve lessons from the entire school, and again more or less of them from designated classes. The golden texts are given in their order by particular classes, at his option. Important verses from the successive lessons are called for; also verses from *intermediate* Bible chapters or sections, when the selected lessons are of a narrative character. He puts questions to the school as to the special teachings of particular lessons, and perhaps comments on these in passing. The recitations and responses are intermingled with singing; and he usually follows them with a brief address in enforcement of the review teachings.

A similar combination of review recitations and examination was wrought out more elaborately by

(

F. A. Ferris, of the Fourteenth Street Presbyterian Sunday-school, New York, on the first Twelve Lessons in Genesis. Appropriate selections, from the lessons and from parallel passages, were assigned to particular classes and individuals, for recitation in the order of the lessons. Each lesson was called for by its title or topic. Its fitting recitations were given by persons previously designated. Free questioning on that lesson, by the superintendent, followed. After singing, the next lesson was similarly taken up. And so through the series. For example :

“MAN’S GLORY AND HONOUR IN THE EARTHLY
PARADISE.”

Class.—“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Teacher.—“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”

Class.—“And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the

air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."

School.—"Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands."

Superintendent.—How came Eve to think of disobeying?

School.—She listened to the tempter.

Supt.—Did she think she would lose or gain by sinning?

School.—She expected to gain.

Supt.—Was she disappointed? or were her expectations realized?

School.—She was disappointed.

Supt.—When Adam and Eve realized their guilt, what did they try to do?

School.—To hide from God.

Supt.—Can any sinner hide from God?

School.—Never.

[The answers here given are in substance those sought by the superintendent. If his first question did not bring out the desired reply, another would be shaped accordingly. Printed schedules of the memorized portions of this review exercise were prepared in advance. The scholars had little slips containing

the texts they were personally to recite, also an outline of the exercise as a whole. The teachers had the exercise in full for their guidance.]

By this method the advantages are attained of an orderly and formal exhibit, through memorized texts, of the entire series of lessons, without losing the benefits of an examination of the school on the teachings of those lessons, through the superintendent's questions.

In the "Berean" adaptation of the International Lessons, Dr. Vincent's counsel is, "The Quarterly Review should usually comprise:—1. A repetition of the topics and golden texts of the quarter; 2. A pleasant drill on the history and geography of the lessons; 3. A careful questioning of the school on the leading truths taught; 4. A concert of responsive readings, including two or more of the lesson-hymns, for opening or closing the session; 5. An address by the pastor or other person enforcing the leading truths taught in the twelve lessons." In reviewing the golden texts, the elliptical mode of calling for them is suggested. Thus, "And we know that . . . work together for . . . to them that . . . God."

These different plans of quarterly review will doubtless suggest other similar plans in variety. Each

of them has peculiar features likely to commend it to some, and to prove advantageous on occasions. Out of them all may be made selections and combinations, and perhaps their best methods may be improved on.

METHODS OF REVIEW QUESTIONING.

Much depends, in reviews, as in other Sunday-school exercises, on the questions put by the leader, in the class or from the desk. Those who have heard Drs. Richard Newton, John Hall, or Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., question a Sunday-school on its lessons of the day, or of a month or quarter, have possibly realized what skill is displayed in the framing of questions to attract attention, to awaken and direct thought, and to give a new life and meaning to the truth elicited. A single question may call out more of hearty interest and of searching thought in an entire class or school than would be provoked by an hour's ordinary teaching. The title, the topic, the golden text, the main incidents, the leading truth of a lesson assumes a new meaning, a new importance, a new preciousness under the startling, the instructive, the persuasive questions of a skilled reviewer. To ask a school, for instance, as to the lesson, in the International Course, on the escape from Sodom, "What is the title of the ninth lesson of the quarter?"

would hardly excite such an interest, as it would to inquire "Which lesson tells of a more sweeping fire than that of Chicago or Boston?" So in improving the teachings of that lesson, there would be an advantage in asking, "Which lesson reminds us that we shall gain most by leaving everything behind at God's call?" instead of, "Which lesson shows the judgment on Lot's wife?" The story has been told of a minister arresting the attention of a godless, but soon converted hearer in his congregation, who was an extensive land-owner, by suddenly asking, in the line of his discourse on the true riches of the soul, "My friends, have you ever thought how much *real estate* was worth in Sodom?" Many a person gains a new conception of a truth, and a new sense of its value, through some such startling inquiry coming to arouse and direct his thoughts.

It is not proposed to discuss in this work the theory and practice of questioning. Mere reference can be made to the advantages of wise questioning in reviews, with a few illustrations of its more effective methods. The teacher or superintendent should look carefully over such portions of the lessons as he is to include in his review, and plan questions on them suited to command the attention and quicken the thought of his scholars, and to bring out and impress

in their minds the truth which is already in his. They have learned the words or the facts of the lessons. His questions can put those words or facts in a new light, and adapt them to new uses. In this way, while questioning his scholars he is both stimulating and instructing them. John B. Smith, of East Hartford, Conn., to whose review exercises reference has already been made, is peculiarly skilled in the manner and phraseology of review questions. Specimens of his work in this line are given herewith as illustrations. He is accustomed to have the titles and golden texts of the lessons memorized by the entire school. His review questions therefore presuppose his scholars familiarity with these. He usually questions separately on the substance, the teachings, and the uses of the lessons, by their titles and their golden texts. For example, on the *titles* of the lessons:

“Which lesson tells of the first brick building of which we have an account?”

(“Confusion of Tongues.”)

“Which tells of a man whose money and new clothes cost him too much?”

(“Gehazi’s Sin.”)

“Which tells of a miracle by which a minister’s poor widow was enabled to pay her debts?”

(“The Widow’s Oil Increased.”)

"In what lesson is given the text of a great preacher, a cousin of Jesus?"

("The Voice in the Wilderness.")

"Which tells of a great water-cure establishment?"

("The Pool at Bethesda.")

"Which tells of a people who preferred their swine to Jesus?"

("The Man among the Tombs.")

It can hardly be doubted that such questions will give new life to a review exercise, and set the scholars at thinking. The same may be said of similar questions emphasizing the *teachings* of reviewed lessons. Scholars will have to think before answering them. That thinking will do them good.

"Which lesson shows that nobody is too good to work?"

("In Eden." Sinless Adam was set to work.)

"Which lesson shows the folly of trying to hide from God?"

("The Fall and the Promise." Adam and Eve could not conceal themselves from God.)

"Which shows that nothing should be kept back when God asks for it?"

("Trial of Abraham's Faith.")

"Which teaches us how to pray for dead souls?"

("The Boy Restored to Life," [by Elisha].)

“Which shows the value of prayer for the sick?”

(“Hezekiah’s Prayer.”)

Then, in the practical *application* of the teachings of the lessons:

“Which lesson should a boy, or a man think of when he drives a powerful horse in safety?”

(“The Creation.” God gave man dominion over every living thing on earth.)

“Which should encourage us, when we find ourselves in the minority at God’s call?”

(“Noah and the Ark.” All the world was against Noah, when he was doing his best work.)

“Which should warn us not to put off repentance?”

(“Jacob and Esau.” Esau repented too late.)

“Which should encourage even the humblest child to expect to do great good?”

(“The Little Captive.”)

“Which should prompt us to be workers for Jesus as soon as we are his disciples?”

(“The First Followers.” Andrew bringing Simon. Philip finding Nathanael.)

So, of the *golden texts*. New thoughts as to their teachings and uses may be prompted by the questions which call them up on review-day. For instance, as to their *teachings*:

“Do you know an angel’s Christmas song?”

(“Glory be to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men.”)

“Did Jesus ever visit Africa?”

(“Out of Egypt have I called my son.”)

“If a man die, is that the end of him?”

(“I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”)

“Which golden text asserts that Jesus is God?”

(“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”)

And as to their *uses*:

“Suppose a man should say to you, ‘One man tells me, This is right; another, This; I am in the dark, and know not what to do.’ What text would you have for him?”

(“Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.’”)

“Suppose one says, ‘I never did much out of the way. I think I am pretty good;’ what text would you have for him?”

(“All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”)

“What text have you for one who says, ‘I mean

to live for Jesus, but I can't speak to my friends about him ?' "

("Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee.")

The best recommendation of this style of questioning is found in its results. Scholars who have been thus trained not only retain in memory the text and teachings of the lessons they have been over, but they are enabled to apply the truth with which their minds are stored, according to the wise suggestions of their teachers and superintendents, and their peculiar personal needs. Its methods are well worthy of study by every leader in exercises of review.

A help in review questioning is found in the designation of particular words calculated to bring each lesson or golden text to mind. The leader selects a word which is peculiar to the phraseology or teachings of that passage, and names it to the school, asking to which lesson or text it belongs. At once the thoughts of all are busy searching the several passages in review, to see which contains the mentioned word, or to which it is appropriate. So thoughts are quickened, and the review is promoted. Dr. Vincent calls these "Help-words." He names several for each lesson in review, suggestive rather of the teachings than of the language of the lesson. For instance, on

"Israel—The New Name," he gives "Night," "Combat," "Daylight," "Victory." Ralph Wells sometimes makes one of these "help-words" the key or text to an extended exercise. Thus in reviewing, in the "Sunday-School Times," Twelve Lessons on Elisha and Israel, he names, to bring to mind the more important scenes in Elisha's life, the words,

"Mantle, Waters, Oil, Child, Leper, Guards, Deliverance."

Then, for the first section of review, he gives this outline for the superintendent's blackboard, or the teacher's slate:—

MANTLE.

Text.—"I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be on me."

Hymn.—"Jesus, I my cross have taken."

Lesson.—An humble, faithful servant exalted.

[The workmen is taken : the work continues.]

Gilgal, Bethel, { Another beautiful robe offered
Jericho, Jordan. { to you.

John B. Smith calls these suggestive words, "Lesson-words," or "Text-words," according to their

source; he taking them from the *language* of the lesson or golden text. Thus he asks,

"Which lesson is called to mind by the word 'Bears'?"

("The Waters Healed." "There came forth two she *bears* out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.")

"Which by the word 'Heel'?"

("The Fall and the Promise." "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his *heel*.")

"Which golden text are you reminded of by the word 'Strengtheneth'?"

("I can do all things through Christ which *strengtheneth* me.")

"Which by the word 'Beginning'?"

("In the *beginning* was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him.")

In the ordinary practice of this method of review, it is sufficient for the teacher or superintendent to simply pronounce the word, without asking a question; the class or school responding immediately with the lesson or text in which it is found. Thus the mention by the superintendent, of the words, consecutively,

"Image," "Fat," "Slime," "Salt," "Venison,"

would bring back, one after another, from the school, the titles of these lessons in Genesis :

“The Creation,” “Cain and Abel,” “Confusion of Tongues,” “Escape from Sodom,” “Jacob and Esau.”

The words, “Sneezed,” “Dipped,” “Windows,” would call up, from the life of Elisha,

“The Child Restored to Life,” “The Leper Healed,” “God’s Deliverance.”

From the golden texts of the lessons on Joseph, the words,

“Babes,” “Sin,” “City,” would be responded to with :

“I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto *babes*.”

“Be sure your *sin* will find you out.”

“For here we have no continuing *city*, but we seek one to come.”

This method is found in practice to work well. The children are interested in it. It promotes thought on the part of all.

VISIBLE HELPS IN REVIEWING.

The eyes of the scholars may in various ways be made serviceable in review exercises. A Bible-reading may be conducted as the opening exercise of the

review,—the superintendent or teacher naming various parallel or illustrative passages, to be found by the scholars in their Bibles, and read aloud, one by one, on his call. The teacher's slate and the superintendent's blackboard may be used at discretion, in presenting the central thought or the successive teachings of the exercise, or in noting its facts biographically or chronologically. Those who fancy chalk sketches of chains, and ladders, and stairways, and arches, and spiral columns, and pyramidal courses, and radiating stars and suns, will be likely to give a section of the chosen picture to each head of the review, while some leaders will form an acrostic and others an alliterative sentence out of the different points in the exercise. The golden texts for one year, or for two or three years, printed in compact form for ready reference, are used in many schools. The review golden text of the quarter is sometimes displayed before the school on the blackboard, or in illuminated letters on a muslin sheet. Diagrams and relics, illustrative of the history, or manners and customs of lands of the Bible brought into notice in the quarter's lessons, are often shown to advantage on review-day. The magic lantern, the stereopticon, or the sciopticon can be made serviceable in connection with reviews, exhibiting large size illustrations of the lessons, in a style

suited to convey a better idea of oriental countries and people than would otherwise attain in most minds. Of course such exhibitions should not take the place of formal review exercises, while they may advantageously accompany them. A week-day evening lecture on the theme of recent lessons may be thus illustrated wisely. Questions on the main points of the lessons illustrated may be asked of the school, in passing.

Maps, also, may wisely be brought into frequent requisition for reference in reviewing. Benson Van Vliet, of New York, giving a review lesson in the "Sunday-School Times," on the first lessons in Genesis, says, on this point:

"Of course, every Sunday-school has a large map in it. Of course the children know where the mountains of Ararat are, and have had pointed out to them the possible location of Eden, and the probable one of Babel. Of course they have seen the race of man, consisting of eight persons at the foot of the mountains, grown to be a considerable nation, building the tower when God confused their tongues and scattered them, and have followed them on the map, and have seen just where the descendants of each of the sons of Noah settled and dwelt. They have undoubtedly traced Abram from 'Ur of the Chaldees'

to Haran, then southward to Canaan, thence to Egypt, and back again to Hebron. They have been taught these things so thoroughly, that they can answer equally as well whether the map is before them or out of sight. . . . Of course you will use a map in your review."

A diagram, showing by stencil-plate letters the catch-words, or suggestive initials of the titles, topics, texts, and teachings of the quarter's lessons, so that all in the room may see it, is often found useful in review-exercises. With the help of this the leader can carry with him the eyes of all, as he points to the letters or words of his diagram, and secure promptness and unity in the answers, while the memory and understanding of those whom he leads are quickened by the suggestive symbols. Mr. Van Vliet arranges the review outline of each lesson on an extended sheet to be shown, one section at a time, on a revolving "song-roll." Mr. Smith, of East Hartford, is more compact in his review outline. He presents it for the twelve lessons in large letters on a hanging sheet, say four feet square, so displayed that it can be seen by all in the room at the same time. His plan is ingenious enough to be shown as an example. The following is his diagram for a review of Twelve Lessons in Genesis:—

| | TITLES. | GOLDEN TEXTS. | FACTS. | COMFORTS. |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------|--|------------------|
| Family. | 1. The C. | In the b . . Word. | { c. world. c. man. | world—I. |
| | 2. In E. | Thou crownedst. | { home. free. | my F . . . good. |
| | 3. F. & P. | As by one. | { chose evil, promised. | merciful. |
| | 4. C. & A. | Ye are come. | { accepted . . . A. rejected . . . C. | accepts. |
| Family. | 5. N. & A. | By faith N. | { u . . . drowned. b . . N . . saved. | never f . . |
| | 6. B. in C. | I do set. | { God made. it means, | every cloud. |
| | 7. C. of T. | He . . . scattered. | { men r. God scattered. | rules. |
| Family. | 8. C. with A. | He staggered | { God . . . promises. Abraham believed. | promises. |
| | 9. E. from S. | How shall. | { Angels . . Lot. Angels . . . Sodom. | just. |
| | 10. T. of A.'s F. | And A. said. | { A. said. A. called. | meet. |
| | 11. J. & E. | And E. said. | { I. blessed. E . . . late. | defeated. |
| | 12. J. at B. | And he . . . verily. | { J . . hard. J. saw. | J. C . . ladder. |

R. T. For whatsoever . . . written . . . aforetime . . . learning.

To aid the memory these lessons are divided into three sections, according to the families of which they treat: the first four relating to Adam's family; the next three to Noah's; the last five to Abraham's. The review text of the quarter is noted along the right hand side of the diagram: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and *comfort* of the Scriptures might have hope." As a purpose of God in giving to us the Scriptures, is that we may have *comfort* from them, it is well in a review like this to see what is the special comfort furnished by each lesson, as well as to note the facts, golden texts, and titles of the lessons. This explains the headings of the several columns of abbreviations on the diagram. The abbreviations themselves are made clear in the course of the review. Their meanings are not all obvious without the leader's explanation; but with that they become most helpful. For instance, as to the first lesson, the leader brings out by questions that its title is "The Creation;" its golden text, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him;" its two great facts, "God created the world," "God created man." He then suggests as a *comfort* in that lesson the thought, "The world

has a Father, and I have a Father." On this showing, the abbreviations of the first line have a clear meaning. If the school has been well taught and well reviewed in the lessons week by week, many of the abbreviations will need no explanation, but even where the school has been poorly taught and not before practiced in this line, two or three repetitions of the texts and statements indicated by the abbreviations are usually sufficient to fix them in the learners' minds. Indeed this review-plan has been used by Mr. Smith not only in his own school, but as an experiment in a mission-school unskilled in reviews, to the unalloyed interest of even the younger scholars, who seemed pleased to give back the correct answer on the second or third trial if they could not at the first.

As the titles and golden texts of the twelve lessons covered by this review-plan are known to those familiar with the International Series, while the "facts" and "comforts" indicated by the abbreviations are not obvious, it may be well to give the following key to these, in further explanation of the diagram:—

LESSON.

FACTS.

COMFORTS.

2. God gave man a beautiful home.

God made man like himself, free.

My Father is good.

3. Man chose evil.

God promised a Saviour.

My Father is merciful.

Sing,

"Jesus the water of life will give."

| LESSON. | FACTS. | COMFORTS. |
|---|--------|---|
| 4. God accepted believing Abel. God rejected unbelieving Cain. | | My Father accepts every believing child. |
| 5. The unbelieving world was drowned. Believing Noah was saved. | | My Father never forgets his believing children. |
| 6. God made the rainbow. It means he will not drown the world any more. | | My Father puts a bow of promise in every cloud to them that believe. |
| 7. Men rebelled again. God scattered them. | | My father rules the world he has made. |
| Sing, "If my home is built upon a rock." | | |
| 8. God made to Abraham great promises. Abraham believed them. | | My Father makes to every believing child great promises. |
| 9. Angels saved Lot. Angels destroyed Sodom. | | My Father is <i>just</i> , as well as good. |
| 10. Abraham said, God will provide. Abraham called the name of the place, Jehovah Jireh. | | My Father will <i>meet</i> my faith. |
| 11. Isaac blessed Jacob. Esau repented late. | | My Father's plans cannot be defeated by his friends. |
| 12. Jacob had a hard pillow. Jacob saw angels. | | My Father has given his Son Jesus Christ to be a ladder for the angels. |

Sing,

"Nearer, my God, to thee."

The diagram being turned at the close of the review exercises, the reverse shows a few words, as follows, to aid, through united recitation, in making a final impression :—

“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob
for his help, whose hope is in the Lord.”

GOD THE CREATOR.

OUR FATHER.

GOOD.

PATIENT.

MERCIFUL.

JUST.

RULING.

MEETING.

PROMISING.

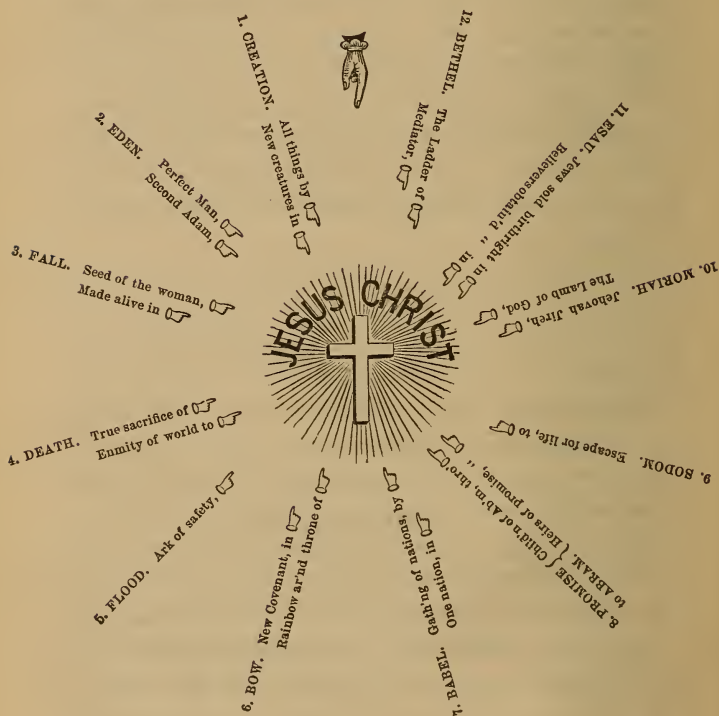
“May the God of all comfort, comfort us in
all our tribulation, that we may be able to com-
fort them which are in any trouble, with the
comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted
of God.”

In a review of the lessons on Israel and Joseph, by John Wanamaker, at Bethany Sunday-school, Philadelphia, a strip of muslin, about three feet wide by twenty-one feet long, was stretched behind the superintendent's desk, from near the floor up towards the ceiling. This strip was coloured in seven sections, the colours blending into one another, and successively brightening from the dark shaded beginning to a golden glow at the top. Across the entire strip was printed the review-text, which it illustrated, "The path of the just," etc.

In reviewing the same lessons, Rev. G. A. Peltz, at Newark, N. J., employed a series of paper strips, six feet long, one strip for each lesson, on which were sketched, in crayon, representations of leading facts in Joseph's life. These strips when suspended, one by one as called for in the review, exhibited the varied path of Joseph, from the tent home of Israel, by way of the sheaves to the pit, thence to Egypt, up and down, and down and up again, until it was lost in the clouds of heaven, while the displayed words over all, "God was with him," told the source of Joseph's prosperity.

Rev. H. C. McCook, of Philadelphia, reviewed the first Twelve Lessons in Genesis, with the help of the following simple and instructive blackboard diagram:—

ALL HISTORY REVOLVES AROUND



While teaching through the eye is just now as much abused as teaching through the ear has long been, and many silly things are being shown on the Sunday-school blackboard, and from the Sunday-school platform, as many silly things have been said from the pulpit and desk, a sound Christian discretion will dictate as to the wise use of all the teaching agencies available, rejecting none merely because they have been often misused; but saying to those who, through sight and hearing, are taught and reviewed effectively and judiciously, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

REVIEWS IN THE TEACHERS' MEETING.

The superintendent who would have his school well reviewed in its lessons each quarter should be careful to instruct and lead his teachers in review exercises. The teachers' meeting immediately preceding a review Sunday, might well be given up to the subject of reviews. Different methods of review might there be canvassed, and the best decided on and accepted. Then is a good time to learn what the teachers have taught during the quarter; and as to this the superintendent needs information; for there can be no intelligent review where there is a lack of knowledge as

to the truth taught in the first examination of the lesson. - Of course there need be no doubt as to the *facts* presented in the quarter's lessons. The letter of the text is conclusive as to them, and the superintendent can review them intelligently. But as to the special teachings from these facts in the several classes, he needs to be informed by the individual teachers. It is a good plan to ask each teacher at the review teachers' meeting what particular truth or truths he has emphasized in his class from each lesson of the quarter. It is well to further ask the teacher what special benefit he has personally received out of the quarter's study in which he has led his class. The varied lessons taught by the several teachers, as thus brought out in the teachers' meeting, will prove suggestive and helpful to all who thus compare them; and out of them the superintendent may select those which he deems best suited for use in the review he finally conducts in the school. He may also indicate to his teachers those lessons which he would have them make most prominent in their class reviews. A superintendent cannot expect that himself or his teachers will do their best work on review Sunday, if he has failed to bring them into mutual conference over this special service, and to counsel them out of his careful study of the entire subject. The experience and wisdom of

all the teachers ought to exceed the attainments of any one. It is for the superintendent to see that each of the teachers has the advantage of all that can be furnished by the others in reviewing, as in first teaching, the lessons, with his own best thought and most careful judgment added.

ANNUAL AND OCCASIONAL REVIEWS.

Annual review exercises are perhaps less common than they should be, although they are by no means unknown. With some schools these are among the most valued exercises of the year; but as yet they lack the general favour shown to reviews at lesser intervals. There seems a peculiar propriety in annual reviews. The year completes a school cycle. The school anniversary is ordinarily observed, with a public exhibit of the year's record of attendance and contributions and special work. As the Bible lessons ought to be of chief interest in the passing Sundays, their review ought to be a prominent exercise in the disclosure of the year's doings. It is a pity, while learning who have been at Sunday-school week by week, and what has been the amount of their missionary giving, not to know what has been studied by them, and to what purpose, in the twelve months reviewed at the Sunday-school anniversary. Even though "it is more blessed to give than to receive," it is by no means better to make an exhibit of what

we have given than of what we have received, in Sunday-school or elsewhere.

There is an advantage in taking the Sunday-school directly before the general congregation for its annual review. The church ought to know what progress is making in Bible knowledge by the children of its charge. Parents ought to learn what is the nature and substance of the instruction given to their children in the Sunday-school. If no more frequently, at least once a year the school of every church should be examined and reviewed in the presence of pastor and people; and the neighbourhood school should be thrown open to the general public, that its "profiting may appear to all."

Even if no Sunday is assigned to annual review exercises, in the plan of the International Lessons, the time should be found for them. Other services might be suspended, to give them a place. Less important anniversary exercises have often been crowded in on a Sunday, when every hour seemed full. If indeed a Sunday cannot be secured, a weekday afternoon or evening may well be taken for this purpose. If there is a will for an annual review, the way will not be lacking.

The methods of annual review need not differ materially from those of quarterly review. The pur-

pose of the two reviews is the same. Lessons which have been studied singly are to be looked at anew in their mutual relations. Only, with the larger number of lessons to be reviewed, there is less time for attention to minor points of interest in the series, in the annual review than in the quarterly. A coast map on the scale of an inch to one hundred miles must leave out many little inlets and smaller headlands that are by no means without a local interest and importance, and which, indeed, must have their place on fuller charts, for use by those first navigating that coast. Yet the smaller map may give a good knowledge of the shore outline, and bring into fitting prominence its bolder promontories, and its principal bays and harbors. To review forty-eight lessons in the same time as twelve, much must be omitted that would otherwise demand attention. Skill in leaving out matter is quite as important as skill in handling what is retained, in an annual review. Skill in the two departments will enable a reviewer to go advantageously over the lessons of one year, or of five years, in a single school session. But the scale of the sketch must be conformed to the outline included and the limits assigned to its exhibition. The grouping of the lessons in their quarterly sections is a natural one for their anniversary examination. "What was the subject of

our first quarter's lessons?" is the point of commencement for the annual review. Many scholars who have not been reviewed in their studies would be unable to tell the subject of their Sunday-school lessons, quarter by quarter, at the close of the year. It is no small matter to gain an intelligent look at the four quarters' lessons, separately and together, when they are once passed over.

The quarterly golden texts, the main facts of each quarter's lessons, and the teachings and uses of these texts and lessons, should be included in the annual review. There will always be found, through careful study, such relations or contrasts in the lessons of successive quarters as will give point to their collective review. If one portion of the year has been given to the Old Testament, and another to the New, an exercise can be arranged to show Christ shadowed and promised in the former, and pictured in his earthly life in the latter. Or, God's provisions for man, under the one dispensation and under the other, can be exhibited from the same lessons. The Law and the Gospel can perhaps be set over against one another. Or prophecies and promises, and their fulfillment, may be shown respectively.

The four quarterly review texts of the first year's series of the International Lessons tells the story of

God's purpose and provisions, in his Word, in behalf of sinners:

I. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

II. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

III. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

IV. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

If the *quarterly* reviews have been well conducted, these texts have such a meaning to the scholars that the superintendent can review them in their mutual relations with comparative ease, and profitably. So of such salient facts or important teachings of the different lessons of the year as he may see fit to use in the annual review.

Each review should be linked, if possible, with the review of the same kind next preceding it. A quarterly review should not be passed without some reference to the lessons of the previous quarter. So each annual review should make mention of the corresponding review of the year before,—and perhaps show the bearing of the one annual course on the other.

Besides these stated weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual reviews, and reviews at other set times, such as semi-annually or biennially, there should often be informal and partial reviews in the studies of every class or school. A truth in to-day's lesson perhaps suggests a lesson of six weeks, or ten months, ago. The two lessons may well be linked. The Egypt into which the young child Jesus was taken is the Egypt where Abram once had a home, and where Joseph passed from the dungeon to the throne. Those who have studied of this land before might be reviewed in their knowledge of its associations on coming to it again. God promised a Saviour, in Eden. The Messiah was also promised to Abraham and to Jacob. When the scholars study the story of Jesus they should be refreshed in their memories of the Old Testament teachings of the coming Redeemer. One golden text may present a similar truth to another of some months before; or it may supply its complement. The former text may well be recalled, on repeating the new one. So, in the class or from the desk the occasional calls for review may bring up former lessons, to give them a new value in the light of recent study.

Peculiarly is it important for the teacher, in his class, to review his scholars according to their indi-

vidual capacity and attainments, rather than by any set rules for all. Ten reviews will be called for on some points, or with some scholars, where one would answer in another case. "Important truth," says Groser, "often needs, and will bear to be repeated, with a frequency proportioned to its intrinsic importance and the dulness of the pupil. The well known anecdote of the celebrated Mrs. Wesley is much to the point. She was reiterating some point of instruction to one of her numerous family, when her husband, who sat by, exclaimed impatiently, 'How can you tell that child the same thing, twenty times over.' 'Because, my dear, nineteen times were not sufficient,' was the quiet but crushing reply." Whether nineteen times or ninety are the limit for the child's need of review, the teacher must ascertain,—and do his work accordingly.

"And these words, which I command thee this day," says the Lord, "shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." The very word translated "teach," in this divine injunction to repeated reviews, is, according to the marginal reading of our English Bible, more literally

“whet,” or “sharpen.” The figure is that of bringing the knife to an edge by striking it first on one side and then on the other, over and over again. To keep his knives in good order the workman has need not only to grind them all at set seasons, but to strike each one a few times on the stone whenever it shows dullness. So of him who would teach his scholars diligently. He must review them statedly, occasionally, and often. “In short,” as says Dr. Gregory, “let it be the standing rule in the class, that reviews are *always* in order.”

ANTIQUITY OF REVIEWS.

The divine injunction to repeated reviews already quoted from Deuteronomy, suggests the thought that review exercises for the teaching and impressing of God's truth are not an agency of modern invention. They are as old as the human race. Their use conforms to God's earliest plan for man's religious culture. A plea for them is a plea for the old paths; for adherence to the method chosen of God for the instruction of his children of old, and commended by him for permanent and universal acceptance.

The Sabbath itself was clearly designed as a day for weekly review—to bring again to mind the already shown truth that God is the Father of us all, and that he counts both work and rest, in their season, acceptable in his service. When God had completed his work of creation, he reviewed it all; “and God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good.” Then “he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.” “*Wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” From

then until now, each Sabbath is a review-day in the plan of God. The change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first has only brought in another item for review, without losing sight of the truth first commemorated. The old creation by Christ, and the new creation in Christ are reviewed together in the Lord's Day Sabbath.

The great feasts and fasts of God's ancient people were all review services—reviewing lessons and truths taught long before. “Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage,” said the Lord, as he prescribed all the suggestive details of the Passover review exercise. “And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. . . . Thou shalt *therefore* keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.” Every memorial stone and pillar set up at God's command reviewed some special dealing of his with his chosen people. Each Hebrew song of deliverance, or psalm of praise, was a review recitation, for the benefit of all who joined in, or heard it. All those daily recitations of the law to which the Israelites were commanded, and all its inscriptions on their door-posts and phylacteries were but reviews of well remembered truth.

What a grand review exercise was that in which the twelve tribes had part on their entrance into the long promised land of Canaan! It was arranged for by Moses. It was carried out under Joshua. "And it shall be," said Moses, "on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster. . . . And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly." Following this command for what might seem the blackboard portion of the review exercise, there came the assignment of the several class-tribes in the review recitations. There were to stand upon Mount Gerizim, to bless the people, Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin. And on Mount Ebal, to utter the curses, were to stand Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Napthali. The Levites were to recite the blessings and cursings, and all the people were to "answer and say, Amen." So, as directed, the plan of review was carried out. "Half of them over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before," stood the tribes of Israel, and their elders, and officers, and judges, and "there was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not

before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them."

How frequently God called, by his servants, on his people to remember his words to, or his works for them: "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt;" "Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Pharaoh;" "Remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee;" "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations;" "Remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them." In such ways God was continually reviewing his children in the facts and teachings of his former dealings with them.

When Jesus came as the Great Teacher, his chief work of instruction was not in telling new truths, but in showing old ones in a new light. Only one "new commandment" did he give to his disciples; but many times did he so review before them the familiar teachings of the old law that all became as new. "Have ye not read?" was again and again his piercing review question to Pharisees, and Saducees, and chief priests, and other cavillers, when he would point them to some Scripture truth, which they had long known but had sadly undervalued. And what a precious closing review of all the Old Testament teachings

was that which he gave to the disciples who walked with him, toward Emmaus, after his resurrection: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." He quoted prophecies and recalled teachings which his disciples had learned or read before; but in the grouping and illumination of their divine review those things had new force and a new meaning in the minds of his disciples. In that exercise Jesus gave the model for all reviews of Old Testament teachings, as he is ever and only the Model Teacher. In looking anew at the former portions of the Word of God, every learner is to find in them fresh glimpses of him who is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last," of all that is written as to God's plans for the redemption of his fallen creatures.

The early Christian church gave prominence to review-exercises in teaching. St. Luke wrote his Gospel not as telling what was utterly new, but in rehearsal "of those things which were most surely believed" among the disciples. "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus," said St. Paul; "Remember that Jesus

Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead ;” “Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things ?” “To write the same things to you,” he added, as to his practice of review, “to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.” To Timothy, he said, “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them ;” and, “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”

The catechumens of the early church were always practiced in review exercises for years before their admission to the full privileges of church fellowship ; and reviews have never since been wholly abandoned as a means of Christian teaching. Every formulated creed is for the review of accepted truths held precious by believers. The “Apostles Creed” is recited in many churches on each assembling for worship—to review old truths, not to present new ones. Catechisms are review compilations for the benefit of young disciples. They are prepared to be once learned, and many times reviewed. All liturgical exercises of worship have a chief value through the familiar truths they review. So of a large share of the hymns

of the ages. Every social gathering for the renewal of the church covenant, for the recital of personal Christian experience, or for the reaffirmation of individual faith, is a meeting for review exercises, testifying, as far as it goes, to the accepted worth of this agency of instruction and impression.

For centuries after the Reformation, the principal work in the religious instruction of the young was in repeating and reviewing truths and statements already memorized. All the catechetical teachings of our fathers, in the Church of England or among the Puritans, were in the proportion of ten hours of review to one of original study. Even when the Sunday-school first gave new prominence to Bible study, a large share of its work was through the reciting and reiterating of memorized texts. It is only since the examination of the truth taught in the passages studied has become a prominent part of Sunday-school work, that review-exercises have diminished in prominence, and that, in consequence, it is needful to call fresh attention to their value and methods.

It is well that the ceaseless reviewing of the words of the Catechism, or of the Bible itself, with which our fathers were largely content, is not now deemed the only method of religious instruction; but that the facts and teachings of the Bible record are examined

carefully by and with the children. It would however be unwise to lose what was advantageous in the old modes of study, while gaining all that is best in the new. Our advance in methods of work should be through adding improvements to former approved agencies, rather than through exchanging one agency for another. "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven . . . bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." It is far better to have both thoughtful study and frequent reviews, than to have, on the one hand, unintelligent memorizing with endless repetitions, or, on the other hand, continual examinations of new truth with little or no reviewing of what has been once passed over.

That child would make little gain in physical strength who was incessantly nibbling at some new bit of even the most nutritious food, without giving his system time to review and digest what it had already taken in. A young man would know little of the delights of social life if he was persistently seeking new acquaintances; never paying attention to any friend of yesterday. It would be a ruinous policy for a merchant to be always making purchases, without stopping to see what he had in store, and finding out what to do with it. The poorest possible mode of reading or studying is in passing rapidly on from

page to page, and from theme to theme, with never a season of thoughtful intelligent review of the intellectual ground already passed over—the very method pursued in every Sunday-school which is yet lacking in systematic review-exercises.

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